

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR FOR ARTIST HOUSING INITIATIVE

Summary

Rhode Island Citizens for the Arts, in cooperation with the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and the Housing Network of Rhode Island, artists and housing professionals (known as the Sustainable Artists Space Committee or "the Committee"), is seeking an Independent Contractor to work on a variety of artist space issues in and with numerous Rhode Island communities.

The fee and expenses for this contract are supported through an initial \$15,000 grant awarded by the State Arts Council, and managed through a partnership with the Housing Network of Rhode Island, a non-profit agency based in Providence. It is anticipated that this project will be funded at this level annually over a three-year period, contingent on the availability of funds. It is the intention of the partners to engage the same Independent Contractor each year during that three-year period.

Interested parties should send a letter describing their qualifications and commitment to obtaining sustainable spaces for artists, along with a detailed resume and a minimum of three references, to Lisa Carnevale, care of Rhode Island Citizens for the Arts, P.O. Box 1632, Providence, RI 02903, or via email at lisacarnevale@yahoo.com. The deadline for receipt of initial letters of interest is Monday, August 2, 2004.

Following review of these letters of interest a select number of applicants will be interviewed by the Committee. An Independent Contractor will be chosen at the conclusion of the interview process.

Background

For the past several months a committee of artists, arts administrators and housing professionals, all under the leadership of Rhode Island Citizens for the Arts, has met to discuss the encroachment on available artist live/work exhibition/performance space, and the need to maintain existing stock or increase potential sustainable real estate for artists' use. This has been a pressing issue in recent years in our state, with an upswing in the number of artists who have been attracted to Rhode Island and those who study at our colleges and universities and decide to stay. They find a dismal housing market, with a lack of affordable spaces that can accommodate them, their families, and the work that they do as artists.

Many artists, of necessity, find space that is impermanent, often substandard or even dangerous. Articles in the paper about the Eagle Square development displacing artists in order to build shopping centers, and artists being evicted from potentially dangerous rental units in Providence, are only the tip of the iceberg.

The housing field also has its successes, such as the Minnesota-based ArtSpace Projects, Inc., whose mission is to provide affordable space for artists. Rhode Island needs to address this problem directly.

This working group has developed a vision statement to inform its work:

We envision a Rhode Island where artists of all disciplines and economic means are able to obtain safe, adequate and appropriate live/work and exhibition/performance space in communities throughout Rhode Island

Independent Contractor Responsibilities

With the leadership and direct efforts of an Independent Contractor, the Committee hopes to improve the environment for artists seeking, in the words of the vision statement, "safe, adequate and appropriate live/work and exhibition/performance space" in Rhode Island for themselves and their families.

In cooperation with the Committee, the Independent Contractor will take a leadership role in the following areas:

- Serve as an information resource for artist space, work directly with artists and act as an intermediary with local officials throughout Rhode Island.
- Identify challenges and impediments in obtaining and developing sustainable space for artists and their families and promote visibility for these issues.
- Implement solutions to these challenges and advocate for effective changes, including at the public policy level (for example, in the area of tax incentive programs).
- Provide technical assistance for artists and small arts businesses in obtaining adequate live/work exhibition/performance space.
- Work with state, local, and non-profit developers to develop sustainable affordable models
- Facilitate cooperative efforts between artists and private developers
- Conduct basic research and consolidate existing information, community by community, statewide and nationally, on successful models and best practices

In summary, the successful applicant will synthesize the above issues and actions in a way that advances efforts and promotes opportunities to develop sustainable artists' space in Rhode Island.

The Independent Contractor, in cooperation with the Committee, will prepare an annual plan of work at the beginning of each year, and will report on progress at the end of each year. In addition, the Independent Contractor will participate in regular meetings with the Committee.

Hours, Payment, Other Logistics

The Independent Contractor will be engaged for a one-year period, with the possibility of renewal in each year for a total of three years. The Independent Contractor will be paid on a monthly basis, upon receipt of an invoice outlining fees and expenses for the previous month. Invoices will be approved by an individual designated for that purpose by the Committee, and funds will be distributed upon receipt of a signed invoice by the Housing Network of Rhode Island, the fiscal agent for this initiative.

In accordance with federal law, the Independent Contractor will be responsible for any and all taxes, fees or expenses related to this project, and will set their own working hours. A written agreement, outlining the work to be accomplished and the conditions of contract will be negotiated following selection of the Independent Contractor.

In engaging an Independent Contractor, the Committee will not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, ancestral origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, or gender identity or expression.

For further information

Contact Lisa Carnevale, Rhode Island Citizens for the Arts at lisacarnevale@yahoo.com